



ILLINOIS GRANGER

*In Essentials... Unity
In Non-Essentials... Liberty
In All Things... Charity*



September 2025 Vol 5 No9



Lynette's Visions and Wisdoms

The weather in south central IL has been HOT and DRY, this last week has been wonderfully cool, but extremely DRY. We need rain! Don and I met with Deb Buck Crew to collect

some of the items she found in her parents' (Bill and Carol Buck) and grandparents' homes. I will bring some of it to State Session to share, possibly to put on auction or FAC raffle. It was fun going through the totes and boxes. It was great reminiscing through some of the pictures; I'll bring them as well. The 154th annual IL State Grange Session and Wisconsin State Grange will be at the Boone County Fairgrounds September 19 – 21, 2025. Hope you are all planning to attend. Brian has sent out the resolutions to the Grange community president and/or secretary. Please be sure that the delegates get a copy of the resolutions. Karie Blasingame and I will be setting up committees soon. If possible, review the resolutions at your next Grange meeting. John Benedik, National Grange Vice President and New Jersey State President, will be our National Representative. Watch your email or USPS box for more information. The schedule will be published in this IL Granger. And I am hoping to get the schedule on the Facebook page. When coming to the fairgrounds, please enter via gate 3. On Saturday, I am asking all Grangers attending to

wear Red, White, and Blue for the Red, White, and You program for National Grange, so yes, you can wear blue jeans, and that will work well for the western theme for the evening. There are only 30 minutes from the close of the meeting to the start of dinner, SO NO time to go to the hotel or home to change clothes. Bring clothes along to change if you need/want to change. Hope you are all working on your contest items so that we have a great display. WI State Grange will be holding their contests on Saturday, so it will be a separate contest for IL and WI. There are many contests so that everyone can show off their talents. The IL contests are on the website, illinoisstategrange.org, under the Departments tab. Secretary Brian has information in this IL GRANGER regarding dates and items necessary. Many fun, exciting events are planned for the IL WI State Grange Session, September 19 – 21. Come Join the Fun. Now that the students are back in school, be safe on the roads.

All Grangers should be inspired and active.



Beaver Valley Report

Hello!

Our July meeting was held on July 18th at the Boone County Community Grange Hall. Our August & Sept meeting will be changed to August 29th and a potluck.

There were reports & helpful reminders were given in Ag, Fairboard, Health education, and Youth & Young Adults.

Marisa O'Dell reminded us that the next Pomona meeting is Sept 3rd, and BVG will do the installation of new officers.

Jerry Paulson reports that the Japanese beetles are showing up. Use soapy water & spray them.

Steve Paulson reported for Safety about loud noise and hearing loss in the workplace.

Exposure to high levels of noise can cause permanent hearing loss. Sometimes neither surgery nor hearing aids can help correct the problem. Always wear your noise-blocking headset or earplugs.

Events BVG will be volunteering, please come and say HI!

-Sept 6th: Tamale Fest

-Nov 1st: Kahlaca Fest

Also, we will be working in the hospitality suite on Friday and Saturday at State Grange. Sept 19th-21st Looking forward to seeing everyone, be sure to come say hello!

Fraternally submitted, Micah Schlie Publicity

County Line News

With a heavy heart, we are saddened by the loss of our brother Noah Mullins, who passed away on August 4, 2025. He will be missed by all. Also Monday August 25th Linda Mullins is having shoulder surgery we are hoping for a speedy recovery. We were busy last month, our Mopar fundraiser was a great success, lots of fun and lots of rain. We got the Grange hall and museum done in time for the fair. That was awesome. We got another thank you for our donations from the veterans assistance commission. We gave money plus lots of food. We did really good at the school house 158 people signed the guest book also

did good on sales of books and mystery bags. Saturday September 27th we are having a Grange day at the Vintage Wings and Wheels Museum at the Poplar Grove Airport. Thanks to Kim robin, we got the Distinguished Grange award. Looking forward to the Appreciation dinner should be fun! Wishing a speedy recovery to Linda Mullins.

See you next month Cathy Zei

Guildford Hope

Guildford Hope Grange met on August 19th at noon at the Paulson Ag Museum for a picnic. The Grange furnished the food, which was enjoyed by all. We had a short business meeting, set the meeting dates, and places for the rest of the year. We also discussed the upcoming State Session, looked over the proposed resolutions, and purchased raffle tickets for the FAC committee. After the meeting, the members toured the facility, which is always very informative.

Nathalie Lyford, secretary

ISG Secretary Report

The 154th annual Illinois State Grange Session, being held in conjunction with the Wisconsin State Grange, is almost here – September 19-21, 2025, at the Boone County Fairgrounds. For those attending, please stop by the registration table on Friday morning when you arrive between 8:30 am and noon to pick up your delegate books, meal tickets, and name tags. For those who reserved meals and/or ordered delegate books but haven't paid yet, please pay at the registration table on Friday morning. If you're only attending part of the Session and won't be there Friday morning, we'll have what you need set aside, and you can pick it up from me or my helpers when you arrive. Are you willing to be a Secretary's Helper during the State Session? That could involve assisting with the registration table, helping with minutes and notes, or other behind-the-scenes tasks. Just let me know what you can help with, and you can

become one of the Secretary's State Session Super Stars!

As always, if you have any questions, send them my way and I'll do my best to help. I look forward to seeing many of you in a few weeks!

Gobbles from Turkey Hill

Our August meeting was a full event. We started with a potluck dinner serving 25+ guests who were members of a local ukulele band, as well as our Community Service award winners and their guests. The Band performed, followed by our Awards.

Awardees were:

Non-Granger of the Year- Kim Brush

Firefighter of the Year- Zachary Miller

Law Enforcement Officer: SGT. Erin Huff

Teacher of the Year: Stephanie Ketchum

Granger of the Year: Jim Coe

We also honored our 2024 Teacher of the Year, Katherine Young, who was chosen by the Illinois Grange as their 2024 Teacher of the Year. Illinois State Grange, Lynette Schaeffer was also in attendance with updates concerning the State Session.



We honored our two scholarship winners, Kylie Richter and Emma Rutledge. After this ceremony, we installed our new Officers. As pictured here, left to right:

Lynne Edwards, David Edwards, Hilda Koluch, Randy McKelvey, Bev McKelvey, Chris Bersett, Angela Kurburski, John Manfredi, Charles Treser, Jane Helms, Nikki Wilcoxon, Ron Bersett, Jill Connors, Jane Bonaldi, Marilyn Coe, Mardy Eisloeffel, Jim Coe, and Lynette Schaeffer.



Our Ham and Peach Dinner was a success. Forty-three Grange workers and 11 non-member workers worked 510 hours to prepare and serve 412 dinners. We sold jams and jellies, canned spiced peaches, and some craft items. Our hard work paid off.

We also regret to announce the passing of another member, Dr. Joe Helms.

Community Service

Hello everyone, my name is Marisa O'Dell, and I am helping Heather Ellwanger with the State Grange Community Service at State Session. We would like to send out a reminder that we are collecting items for The Haven Network in Rockford, Illinois.

The Haven Network is an independent Christian ministry offering life-affirming services, providing emotional, spiritual, and practical support for families who have experienced the death of a baby through miscarriage, stillbirth, ectopic pregnancy, SIDS, and early infant death, and families who are facing a terminal diagnosis of their pre-born or newborn baby. They strive to help parents build memories of their precious little one, enabling them to remember this difficult time with comfort, knowing that they did the best for their baby and entire family. All their services are provided at no cost to the families they serve.

A few helpful ideas for items are Forever Stamps (postage is one of their biggest needs).

- Restaurant Gift Cards (provided to families so that they can enjoy a meal together. A simple gift that means a lot in times of sorrow) \$25.00
- Amazon Gift Cards (used to purchase supplies)

- Hobby Lobby Gift Cards (used to purchase craft supplies)

A QR code for their Amazon wish list is below as well. Hope to see everyone at State Session. Please keep Heather and her family in your



thoughts and prayers.
Marisa O'Dell
Acting Illinois Community
Service for Heather
Ellwanger



National Rep for State Session

John Benedik, III, of Flemington, New Jersey, was elected National Grange Vice President in 2023. John is a 44-year Grange member in New Jersey, and currently the President of Stanton Grange #148, the President of Hunterdon Pmona Grange #3, and President of New Jersey State Grange. John is currently a bank manager, enjoys reading John Grisham novels, and is a big New Jersey Devils fan.

Illinois State Youth

Howdy and welcome to the end of Summer. Where has all the time gone? As we are getting ready for State Session, we have a few reminders. If you are considering marching in the drill on Sunday morning of State Session please adhere to the suggested attire. Jeans, Cowboy hat, Flannel Shirt, Cowboy boots, if you have them. NO OPEN-TOE SHOES. We hope everyone is planning on bringing their items for the contests. We love seeing everyone's creativity. Just a reminder, anyone can enter our department. Youth and Young at Heart. Dinner will be a Murder Mystery Dinner that we did for Spring Fling. If you have a part, we will be reaching out

very soon. If you would like a part, please also reach out to myself or Karie. We are excited for Session and to reveal what next year's theme will be. But you must go to the Drill on Sunday to find out.

See you at Session,
Marisa and Karie
CO-Youth Directers

Executive Committee Secretary

At our last Executive Meeting, we voted to ask all members to help keep expenses for the Granger down. We would like you to bring one book of forever stamps to State Session. We will have a box for you to drop them in. I was also wondering if members could also do a ream of computer paper and a box of peel and stick envelopes #10 (size is 4.13in. by 9.5in) This would be a help for Ruth to keep her expenses down. You would not have to donate all three, only what you would like to donate. Thank you for your help.

Debra Wade, Executive Committee Secretary

Flora Grange Report

Flora Grange held their August meeting one week later, due to the Boone County Fair, on Tuesday, August 19th, 2025, at 7 pm at the Flora Grange Hall. President Ken Fidler called the meeting to order, followed by the Grange Salutation and Pledge to the American Flag. Chaplain Donna West and Ken Fidler draped the Charter for Gene Lane, who had been a member for many years. Roll call was taken by Secretary Laurel Ratcliffe and the minutes of the June 10, 2025, meeting were approved. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES: COMMUNITY SERVICE: Lindakay Ebel reported she turned in our Community Service book on July 30th, was disappointed we did not have as many people turn in hours as previous years. AGRICULTURE: Roger Miller stated the crops are looking good, and corn is looking good this year. Costs are already going

FAIRBOARD: Todd Hegge reported it was a good fair; attendance was down a little from last year, due to the heat and the rain on Sunday. Some of the shows were down, some were up. Jack Ratcliffe thanked everyone who came out and helped in any way this year. It takes a lot of work and people working together to put on a good fair. Laurel also thanked those who worked at the food stands and the gates.

FARMLAND PROTECTION: Jack Ratcliffe said they will be meeting. This month, they did not meet in July and August.

LEGISLATIVE: Marion Thornberry says our President of the United States say one thing, and our governor of Illinois says another. Who do we believe?

MEMBERSHIP: Lindakay Ebel reported that we are down on our membership, as all clubs and organizations are. We all need to get out and try to start talking up our Grange and promoting it.

FAMILY ACTIVITIES: Deb Silvers has tickets for the raffle for the Illinois State Grange. She also encourages us to bring in items for the Agricultural and Family Activities.

QUILTING: Emalee Colver stated her group met last weekend, and the other group is not sure when they will be meeting.

GROUNDS: Jack Ratcliffe reported the lawn has been mowed. However, there are high weeds that need to be cut by the air conditioner; you must be careful not to cut the gas lines that are near the weeds.

TREASURER'S REPORT: Lindakay Ebel had written a treasurer's report for all in attendance, for all the checks written and all income since the last meeting, and balances of each account.

Motion was made to approve the report. Motion at tonight's meeting included the following: (1) Purchase A well-used refrigerator, if one could be found for the Grange Hall. (2) Spring Roast Beef dinner will be served at Our Grange Hall on March 29, 2026 (Palm Sunday) (3) Executive Board members, Bob Scherer 2 years, Marilyn Ryan 3 Years (4) send \$100.00 to Heather Ellwanger. Program, Jack Ratcliffe had a reading, In the Sky' about how Geese are like

Grangers, they form a 'V', they have a foundation, they have a common goal, they stand by each other, when one gets out of formation, others help the one that's out of place, that is what Grangers do or should do. \$15.00 was collected in 'G' bills tonight; birthdays celebrated were Donna West and Marion Thornberry. The September meeting will be on Tuesday, September 9th, 2025, at 7 pm, and will be an election of officers for Flora Grange.

Lindakay Ebel, Publicity



Broad Hollow Grange

Broad Hollow Grange's monthly potluck was held on August 1st with lots of good food available. The hall was decorated with a summer theme. The program consisted of a summer poem, riddles, a short history of New Athens, Freeburg, Smithton, and Hecker, a summer quiz, and funny sayings about old age.

Due to the 4th of July occurring on the 1st Friday, the potluck and program were held on July 1st. The tables and hall were decked out in red, white, and blue. A social time was held after the potluck. At the June potluck, a fun evening of White Elephant games followed the event. Participants were honored for Father's Day.



Schedule of Events of the 154th Annual Session of the Illinois State Grange and Wisconsin State Grange

Belvidere, IL, Boone County Fairgrounds

September 19-21, 2025

Friday, September 19, 2025

8:30 AM – Noon

Registration & Contest entries in place in display room

10:00 State Officers Practice Sixth Degree Practice

1:00 PM Open in the Sixth Degree – Lynette Schaeffer, President Open to all Delegates and Grangers attending from IL and WI

Roll Call of Officers Close in the Sixth Degree Open in the Fourth Degree, Presentation of John Benedik, National Grange, past IL and WI State Presidents & Spouses, and past National Directors,

Presentation Boone County Fairboard Chairman, Jack Ratcliff

Response –Karie Blasingame, Vice President

Roll Call of Delegates Both states if there are WI delegates there

Adoption of Order of Business –Frank D Wurth, Chair Exec Comm

Meeting place for 2026 – Springfield, Illinois, Northfield Inn Sept 11 – 13, Invitation of Meeting Place 2027 in St Clair.

Reports –Treasurer [Frank Wurth] (Budget), Secretary [Brian Keller] (Credentials), Exec Committee [Debbie Wade]

2:15 Recess

2:30 Election of Officers

Appointment of Session Committees Assignment of Resolutions IL & WI delegates together to work on resolutions.

Committee Instruction by President and Vice President Resolutions to the committees

Appointment of Session Committees Assignment of Resolutions

Committee Instruction by President and Vice President

Resolutions to the committees

4:00 Grange Closed in the Fourth Degree

Committee Meetings

6:30 Main Banquet

7:00 Evening Program

Introduction of Special Invited Guests Alice in Dairyland Debbie Vine

Summary of Address of State President – Lynette Schaeffer & WSG President Debbie Vine
Community Service Awards – Heather Ellwanger, Director & Haven Network state project
WSG Community Jean Peterson
Membership Awards – Robin Kindberg, Director & WSG membership Quilt of Valor – Marisa O'Dell
8:30 Committee Meetings
Saturday, September 20, 2025

7:00 Ag Chairman: Brian O'Dell Speaker: Chief Meteorologist Candice King (WTVQ) (Breakfast earlier)
8:00 Opening in Fourth Degree Debbie Vine, WI President Roll Call of State Officers IL & WI
Roll Call of Delegates (IL & WI) Reading and Adopting of Minutes 8:45 Junior Grange Report
and Awards, Mindy Schiefer, Director
9:45 Recess WI will leave to complete their work during this time.
10:00 Report – Committee on Finance & Accounts
10:15 Committee Reports
11:30 Family Homemaking Projects Luncheon – Ann Johnson, Director & Raffle Ronna Ballmer WI Lecturer
1:15 PM Obligation Fifth Degree Obligation – Karie Blasingame
Conferring of Sixth Degree – IL State Grange Officers
3:00 Recess
3:15 Grange Historian – Beverly Smith
3:40 National Grange Representative Report/Workshop –
Committee Reports
5:00 Grange Closed in Fourth Degree (Take possessions with you)
5:30 Youth/Young Adults Banquet – Karie Blasingame and Marisa O'Dell Directors, WSG
Youth Western is the theme. Mystery Dinner
8:30 Auction
Sunday, September 21, 2025

8:00 AM Celebration of Life and Worship – Charlotte Mehrtens, Chaplain WSG Chaplain
8:45 Opening in the Fourth Degree Youth/Young Adults Officers WSG also Roll Call of Youth
Officers Roll Call of State Officers ISG and WSG Roll Call of Delegates WSG
Reading of State Minutes
9:00 FAC/AG – Final Reports and Sash Transfers
Community Service Booklets, – Heather Ellwanger, Director WSG
Lecturer Report – Ethan Edwards WSG Lecturer
Committee Reports
Completion of Remaining Business/Installation of officers ISG & WSG Closing of the ISG
154th Annual Session



Chaplains Corner

By: Charlotte Mehrtens

Welcome to September and hopefully cooler weather. This summer has really been a time. I had lots of laughs and some tears. I had three squirrels that were determined to drive me nuts. It was bad enough; it was like I dare you to put feed in the feeders for the birds. It was like I dare you. When the heat cooled in the evening, those little snickers would come right up to me like I'm going to climb in the feeder and eat right in front of me. Don't know how many times I got up and chased them away, only to have them come right back to start all over again. Then one day I thought to myself, these are really God's creatures, and sometimes our lives can feel like squirrels, quick, hurried, and like us, we also like adventures. We question the directions we're going and wonder if we even know if we are on the right path. But just as the squirrel follows its instincts and unseen rhymes of survival, and we too are called to follow a deeper guide.... our Creator, Proverbs 3 reminds us that we trust in the Lord with all heart. God will make our paths straight. It means God gives purpose even in the winding parts. Keep your faith in our Lord and Savior.

We send our deepest sympathy to our Grange families who have lost loved ones. We send prayers for those returning to school. May God walk with you in all you do. God's blessings be to all of you.



Well Done Good and Faithful Servant



Joseph B. Helms

January 1937- July 2025

Joseph was a long time member of Turkey Hill Grange and will be deeply missed.



Noah Narwel Mullins

July 1943-August -2025

Noah was a long time member of County Line Grange and will be deeply missed.

Calendar of Grange Events

9/5-6 4Momz2Momz Prairie Consignment Sale

9/19-21 State Session at Boone County Fairgrounds

11/8-16 National Grange Cruise

NOTE: Please send me any important dates, members in nursing homes, rehabs, or senior living, obituaries, donations, births, weddings, any good news from your Grange so I can add them to the newsletter.

Ruth Blasingame 815-299-7884

illinoisgranger2017@gmail.com

8711 Deer Run Drive Belvidere, IL 61008

Sammantha Meyers, with her background in education and community coordination, will be stepping in this July to support the Granger publication with Ruth Blasingame.